# AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1231 — WILLIAM GREEN, President — WASHINGTON, D. C., SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1934 — FRANK MORRISON, Secretary — VOL. 24, NO. 46


Neither adversity nor prosperity ever changes a man; each merely brings out what there is in him.

## Editorial

### Running Away From Trade Unions

The regional labor board for New York, New Jersey and Connecticut has made an interpretation of Section 7-A of the National Industrial Recovery Act which merits attention.

The question before the board was: Is it legal for a company arbitrarily to scrap a union contract, move to a cheap labor area, and refuse to employ its old employees because they insist upon collective bargaining?

The matter arose in the case of two Brooklyn fur-dressing concerns which had contracts with fur-dressers' unions. The contracts prescribed that the employers should not abrogate them without due notice. In their desire to chisel wages the firms repudiated the contracts without formal notice, moved their plants to South Norwalk, Conn., and Farmingdale, Long Island, where they believed there was an abundance of cheap unorganized labor, and refused to employ their old employes in the new locations because those employes "wanted to bargain on the terms and conditions of employment through union representatives."

The regional labor board held this refusal constituted a violation of Section 7-A of the Recovery Act, which declares that "no employe and no one seeking employment shall be required as a condition of employment * * * to refrain from joining, organizing, or assisting a labor organization of his own choosing." The decision added:

> **"The board cannot ignore the social and economic consequences of this act of migration to a territory where the workers—not only in this industry—are largely unorganized. By removing its plant to South Norwalk some ninety-seven workers are added to the ranks of the unemployed in New York City, to be supported by public or private relief. * * * Termination of an agreement between employer and employe, and other conditions of work does not terminate the employment of individuals working under such an agreement."**

Basing its action on this ruling, the board ordered the concerns to reinstate in their old positions all workers who applied for such reinstatement.

The general application of this rule would make it very difficult for wage-chiseling firms to escape the higher living standards of union labor by moving to localities where the workers are not organized and consequently compelled to accept low wages and living conditions recognized to be far below the minimum requirements for health and comfort.

Insofar as production costs are influenced by wages and hours at the high levels fixed by organized labor, it would tend to prevent the cheap labor owners of industry from relocating their plants in low wage areas. It would also accustom consumers to pay for the commodities they require prices based on high wages and decent living standards, which are the basis of real prosperity throughout the United States.

Propagandists—some anti-union outfits—contends that there may be firms who are unable to continue in business unless they move to cheap labor localities. The patriotic reply to this argument is that such concerns should go out of business, and the sooner the better. The American people as a whole do not want commodities which are cheap because they are produced by cheap labor.

## Exchange of Felicitations Between Salvation Army and the A. F. of L. Emphasizes Years of Cooperation

### Commander Evangeline Booth, Promoted to General, Will Go to England With Sincere Good Wishes of the Entire American Labor Movement.

*By A. F. of L. News Service.*

Washington.—Release of an exchange of correspondence between Evangeline Booth, General-Elect of The Salvation Army, and William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, is generally accepted to emphasize at this opportune time the mutual and friendly cooperation that has existed between these two important humanitarian organizations throughout a long period of years.

Writing to President Green, the well-loved General-Elect expresses her appreciation to organized labor of America, and showers a parting blessing. Replying, President Green expresses thanks of the labor movement and gives assurance of continued support.

The two interesting letters are reproduced below:

THE SALVATION ARMY
*National Headquarters*
120-130 WEST FOURTEENTH STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y.

November 1, 1934.

MR. WILLIAM GREEN, President,
American Federation of Labor,
A. F. of L. Building,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Green:

After thirty years of service in the United States, I have been called to the Generalship of The Salvation Army. I cannot leave this country without a word of farewell to you from my heart to the many thousands of members of the American Federation of Labor.

During this long period you have been faithful and invaluable friends of the Army in the endeavor to render service to all in the community, whatever their race or creed or politics, who stand in need of a helping hand. Your hearts have been touched no less than ours by sorrow and suffering, and we have been privileged, indeed, to fulfill in some measure your sympathetic impulse to assist others.

I send you a message of affectionate good-will, and I am sure that I shall be accompanied by your sympathetic interest as I seek to carry the tidings of peace and life to the ends of the earth.

The Salvation Army still needs your cooperation; in fact, will need it more than ever before because of my absence from the country—not for its own sake, but for the sake of the multitudes whose troubles and sorrows lie heavy on your hearts and ours.

May God bless you all in your hopes, your occupations, and your many important activities. I can never forget the courageous way you have stood by us in times of storm. May everyone who reads my few words of grateful farewell be abundantly enriched by the Giver of all Good with a strength and courage to fight His battle bravely and so play a part in winning the battle for the happiness of all.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) EVANGELINE BOOTH,
General-Elect.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
A. F. OF L. BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D. C.

November 12, 1934.

MISS EVANGELINE BOOTH, General-Elect,
The Salvation Army,
New York, N. Y.

My dear Miss Booth:

I thank you sincerely for your letter dated November 1st, for your message of affectionate good-will and for your expression of appreciation of the help and service rendered The Salvation Army by the American Federation of Labor. The well wishes, sympathy and support of the membership of the American Federation of Labor are extended to you in assuming your position as Commander-in-Chief of The Salvation Army.

The honor conferred upon you is most worthily bestowed. No one connected with The Salvation Army is better fitted, through training, experience and understanding, to serve in the responsible and honorable position to which you have been called. We will follow your work with unusual interest and I assure you that we will endeavor to give to The Salvation Army our continued cooperation and support.

With kind personal regards and best wishes, I beg to remain,

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) WILLIAM GREEN,
President,
The American Federation of Labor.

## Economic Security Conference Assures Interest and Early Action

### Powerful Address by Thomas Kennedy Strikes Keynote of Workers' Insurance Needs.

*By A. F. of L. News Service.*

Washington.—Of the several addresses delivered at the Conference on Economic Security here, that of Thomas Kennedy, secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers of America and Lieutenant-Governor-elect of Pennsylvania, stands out as striking the keynote of the needs of workers for unemployment insurance and means of its practical accomplishment on a national basis.

So far, not all economists and others interested are agreed that the matter should be handled directly by the Federal Government, but Mr. Kennedy stated the case so clearly and effectively as to command the utmost attention and respect.

President William Green, of the A. F. of L., and other responsible representatives of organized labor discussed various phases of economic security problems, which the committee command serious consideration of all.

#### The Address

As it presents a definite plan for unemployment insurance on a national basis, Mr. Kennedy's address is given complete insertion:

"It is my judgment that the country is in agreement as to the need for unemployment insurance, but not agreement on the conditions of wage earners has been worse than under the system of slavery which preceded the Civil War. In times of loss or bad years, the slave owners at least took care of their slaves themselves when food and shelter—until prosperous conditions returned. On the other hand, the attitude of modern industry has been to cover, in times of industrial workers, when business activity receded, have been thrown upon the streets of industrial centers, to shift care of themselves as best they may or to be supported by public or private charity.

"If, on the contrary, as we hope, the former grievous conditions of the old capitalistic system are to be lessened, or, in other words, if we shall be fortunate as to add the magic word 'reform' to our plans for economic recovery, and thus attain to more regular and steady employment, better standards of living, more equitable distribution of the output of industry, and, in brief, a more socialized and humanitarian condition of industrial operations—unemployment insurance will still be necessary to cover the transitional period.

"Moreover, we cannot hope, even with needed reforms, to attain at once to a condition of economic stability and unbroken continuity in industrial operations. Under any new system of industry, therefore, however much improved it may be as compared with the past, a system of unemployment insurance will still be necessary for the relief of workers. It must be organized and made ready to meet any unforeseen contingency which may arise. Numerous influences, some of which are not subject to domestic control, such as a falling off in foreign demand for certain manufactured or agricultural products, may at times adversely affect employment. Through economic reforms, in other words, we seek to improve conditions as to reduce the cost of unemployment insurance, but the system itself must be firmly established and liberally developed, so as to safeguard the workers and society as a whole against any contingencies which may arise.

"It is my firm conviction that the unemployment insurance system should be national, or, in other words, that it should be organized and operated under the auspices of the Federal Government. Any plant reserves such as contemplated in Wisconsin, in my judgment, would not fit in any arrangement or policy upon a national basis.

> **"The United Mine Workers of America, the largest single organization on the North American continent, John L. Lewis, its head, and Massachusetts State Federations of Labor in opposing company reserves plans likewise they would foster and aid company unions.**

"This is equivalent to saying that the scope of the unemployment insurance system should follow that of industry itself. All of our basic industries—coal and steel manufacturing, coal mining, textile manufacturing, transportation, automotive production, clothing, foods, etc.—are national in their organization and operation.

"The American labor movement is opposed to employe contributions to national unemployment insurance funds for the reason that any cost assessed against industry can be absorbed in the cost of production. If employes are forced to contribute, they, who constitute 85 per cent of the total purchasing power of this nation, would be forced to eventually pay all of the cost by reason of their purchase of the commodities of industry.

"Bituminous coal mining operations, for example, are carried on, under one national wage agreement in more than 30 States. The clothing manufacturing industry covers more than 40 States. Outside of a few natural resource industries, we have no industry between localization of mining and manufacturing undertakings. With the production of industry thus dominating the state commerce they could very naturally fit into a national picture for coverages. Moreover, in the case of a non-holding companies, subsidiary corporations cover every section of the country.

"State segments, or primary state organizations, cannot, therefore, be theoretically detached for unemployment insurance purposes from the interstate competitive conditions would be dislocated, and the costs of insurance could not be fairly distributed between different sections of the country except through a national system. Since June, 1933, NRA codes for all industries have sought to bring about national uniformity in costs and equality in competitive conditions for all industries.

> **"Of course, I am aware that some of our reactionary groups, as always is the case, have raised the question of unconstitutionality against a national system. No**

### Advisory Committee Named by President, Who Addresses Conference at White House.

*By A. F. of L. News Service.*

Washington.—Practical strides were made here during a two-day conference of 200 experts in evolving a program for economic security. The conference, from November 14 and 15, was called by President Roosevelt and was held under auspices of the President's Committee on Economic Security, headed by Secretary of Labor Perkins.

#### Advisory Committee Named

Prior to convening of the conference, a special Advisory Committee was named by the President, including the following: Frank P. Graham, chairman; Gerard Swope, Morris E. Leeds, Sam Lewenthal, Marion B. Folsom, Walter C. Teagle, William Green, George M. Harrison, Paul Scharrenberg, Henry Ohl, Jr., Belle Sherwin, Grace Abbott, Paul U. Kellogg, George H. Nordlin, George N. Berry, Josephine Roche, John G. Winant and Louis J. Taber.

#### President and Others Speak

Special conferences of the Economic Security Advisory Committee and of the President's Committee on Economic Security were executive, to speed action, but general sessions were held, at which one of these President Roosevelt deliv-

> **worthy cause or movement for human welfare has ever been free from such indirect and insidious attacks, I am informed, however, by competent counsel that no apprehension should be felt as to the constitutionality of a national system.**

"Finally, it is my opinion that such a national system should be organized and installed as soon as possible, even under the abnormal conditions which prevail at present. Special funds for this purpose should be immediately made available by Federal appropriations and provisions for their repayment arranged by assessments upon industry. In a word, this would mean that the cost of unemployment insurance would be part of the cost of production in the same manner and way as workmen's compensation benefits are provided, except contributions here would be to a national fund.

"While such special measures are practical and desirable, as a general policy, however, I believe that a system of unemployment insurance at the present time should provide funds through emergency advances from the Federal Government for the purpose of changing relief payments to unemployment insurance payments. Such a procedure would obviously add to the self-respect and morale of unemployed industrial workers.

"Funds so advanced by the Federal Government to the newly instituted unemployment insurance system could be gradually amortized over a period of years. Such a procedure for a period of years was practically followed by Great Britain. Unemployment insurance had already been established there prior to the unprecedented restriction of industrial operations following the World War, and the Government made 'transitional payments' to the insurance funds in order to maintain the system, and to prevent the substitution of an entirely new system of unemployment relief. Unlike Great Britain, we are in the midst of an unprecedented depression without any established system of unemployment insurance, but I believe that in organizing a system, we should recognize the same principles and make provision for transitional or emergency payments in lieu of the measures of direct relief now in effect.

"At the time of the revision of the British Unemployment Insurance Act in 1920 (it was originally enacted in 1911), insured workers who were employed numbered only about 200,000. Because of the trade depression, however, which followed, the number who were actually employed had by June, 1921, increased to 2,000,000. Another 1,000,000 was working part time also and claiming insurance benefits.

"As it had been impossible, during the short time in which the revised act had been in effect, to build up reserves from contributions of workers and of the industry sufficient to meet the emergency, the British Exchequer or Treasury, in the British Government of that time, took control, these unemployment benefits have taken the form of direct relief.

"The decision of the British Government, during the stressful period following the World War, to make these emergency unemployment benefit payments, in the opinion of authoritative commentators, was the means not only of maintaining the morale of its workers but also was the means of avoiding open social revolt and possibly revolution.

"It seems to me also that at the present time in our own country, when we agree upon a plan of unemployment insurance, because of the emergency conditions with which we are confronted, industrial statesmanship if, in lieu of direct relief, we would make provision for Federal appropriations to unemployment insurance funds sufficient to pay benefits to those now unemployed who normally would be employed; and also additional appropriations to provide rehabilitation for those who, because of mechanization and improved technological methods, will be permanently unemployed, unless they are trained and prepared for occupations other than those which they originally followed."

ered a splendid address, in which he strongly urged the necessity for economic security, including unemployment insurance and old-age pensions, but declared that recovery must be placed ahead of reform.

William Green, president of the A. F. of L., and numerous others spoke in what is conceded to be the most important economic conference ever held in America.

#### President's Security Address

The text of President Roosevelt's address to the Advisory Council of the National Conference on Economic Security follows:

"I am glad to welcome you to the White House and to tell you that I am happy that there is so much interest in the problem of economic security.

"Last June I said that this winter we might well make a beginning in the great task of providing social insurance for the citizen and his family.

"I have not changed my opinion. I shall have recommendations on this subject to present to the incoming Congress.

"Many details are still to be settled. The Committee on Economic Security was created to advise me on this matter. It will bring to me, not any hastily conceived views, but a mature judgment after careful study of the problem and after consultation with the Advisory Conference and the cooperating committees.

"On some points it is possible to be definite. Unemployment insurance will be in the program. I am still of the opinion expressed in my message of June 8th that this part of social insurance should be one of these funds as a means of stabilization may be maintained in central management and coordinated on a national basis.

"Unemployment Insurance must be set up with the purpose of decreasing rather than increasing unemployment. It is, of course, clear that because of the magnitude of the investment and liquidation of reserve funds must be within control of the Government itself.

"For the administration of insurance benefits, the States are the most logical units. At this stage, while unemployment insurance is still untried in this country and there is such a great diversity of opinion on many details, there is room for some degree of difference in the methods, but not in principles.

"That would be impossible under an exclusively national system. And so I hope you will be able to work from all parts of the country that no one will there have to be a Federal law on unemployment insurance, but State laws will also be needed.

#### Looks to Legislatures

"In January the great majority of State legislatures will convene, as well as Congress. You who are interested in seeing that unemployment insurance is established in your own States should make your plans accordingly.

"We must not allow this type of insurance to become a dole through the mingling of insurance and relief. It is not charity. It must be financed by contributions, not taxes.

"What I have said must not be understood to mean that we should do nothing further for the present time on relief. On the contrary, they must be our first concern. We must get them back into productive employment and as we do so we can bring them under the protection of the insurance system. Let us profit by the mistakes that in organizing a system, we should recognize the same principles and make provision for transitional or emergency payments in lieu of the measures of direct relief now in effect.

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## Automobile Workers Ask Complete Investigation of Industry's Ills

### Cite Some Injustices and Contend Present Board Not Capable of Getting Proper Results.

*By A. F. of L. News Service.*

Detroit, Mich.—An appeal has been made to President Roosevelt on behalf of the many thousands of members of the 63 local unions of automobile workers, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, for a complete investigation of the automobile industry and the remedying of some of its pertinent ills.

This followed an invitation to Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., president of General Motors, to participate in a conference with union representatives, which has not been accepted.

#### Cite Injustices

The matter was laid before the President in a letter from F. J. Dillon, general organizer and in charge of the Detroit office of the A. F. of L., and followed announcement of the extension of the automobile code for 90 days from its expiration November 3, and a statement by the President that investigation of the industry would be undertaken in the meantime.

Mr. Dillon wrote in part:

"There are certain factors which constitute an integral part of the seasonal fluctuations which wreak such tremendous hardships and injustices upon the workers in this gigantic industry. Chief among these are: (1) the speed-up system, (2) discriminatory wage standards, (3) job insecurity and extremely low annual earnings, (4) discrimination against older workers, (5) discrimination against union members, (6) replacement of men by women workers.

"In addition, the automobile industry needs a thorough and complete investigation. There should be no mere perfunctory investigation, but one which will reveal all of the facts, and in the accomplishment of this you may be assured of the support and cooperation of the United Automobile Workers' Union.

"It is our opinion that these factors should be given, exceedingly careful attention in any study which is calculated to aid in solving the problems with which the employers and the employes in the automobile industry are mutually confronted. It is our further belief that such a study can be most effectively carried out if the direction and execution of it is entrusted to a bi-partisan commission composed of representatives of management and labor, appointed by you, and under the chairmanship of an outstanding well-known man as representative of the Government, for in this way problems of both sides can be systematically studied and objectively presented by men familiar with both sides of the question.

"To acquaint you with the ideas of the automobile worker on this matter we are enclosing a copy of resolution adopted by the National Conference of United Automobile Workers held in Detroit on June 23d and 24th of this year, inclusive. This resolution requesting an impartial study of the labor problems of the automobile industry was directed to the Automobile Labor Board, but to date we have had no reply in this matter, and respectfully express the opinion that a proper and satisfactory investigation of the industry would be impossible of accomplishment by this board as at present constituted."

## Soap Workers Gain Recognition As "Company Union" Is Trounced

### Los Angeles Regional Labor Board Rules in Important Complaint Against Big Proctor & Gamble Company.

*By A. F. of L. News Service.*

Los Angeles, Calif.—Another victory can be scored for bona-fide unions against the infamous "company union."

In the case of the Soap & Edible Oil Workers' Union against the Proctor & Gamble Manufacturing Company, of Long Beach, the Los Angeles Regional Labor Board has ruled that the bona-fide union, rather than an "Employes' Conference Committee," is the sole collective bargaining representative for employes of the firm.

#### Appeal Filed

The company has announced an appeal to the National Labor Relations Board, as usual in such cases, although all labor officials agree that this can mean nothing more than confirmation of the Regional Board's decision.

> **The company was charged with intimidation of employes in an election held May 24, 1934, discharging certain employes in union activities and failing to abide by the certification of the election by the Labor Board.**

#### Labor Is Elated

The Regional Labor Board also ordered the reinstatement of George T. Hinde, holding that he had been unjustly discharged for union activities. According to Jay Darwin Casey, representing the American Federation of Labor in San Francisco, who has been in close touch with the situation throughout, the entire labor movement of Southern California is greatly elated over this decisive victory.

From New York comes word that Proctor & Gamble have declared an extra dividend on their common stock, payable December 15, aside from the regular quarterly dividend due in January.

## Economic Planning To Be Studied At Conference, Nov. 23

*By A. F. of L. News Service.*

New York.—The International Industrial Relations Institute (IRI), located at The Hague, has announced a regional study conference on social economic planning, to be held November 23 to 27 in the Russell Sage Foundation Building, New York.

The call, issued by the international director, M. L. Fledderus, and the associate director, Mary van Kleeck, declares that during the depression, "the whole idea of economic planning has made a deep impression upon public opinion everywhere, and new developments have taken place in the relation of government to industry in many countries. It is timely now to examine the necessity for such forms of social economic planning as may end unemployment and raise standards of living."

The conference, designed primarily for those concerned with adult education on social economic issues, is an outgrowth of the World Social Economic Congress held in Amsterdam, Holland, under the auspices of the IRI in 1931.

## PRESIDENT GREEN CALLS BUILDING TRADES MEET

### A. F. of L. Building Trades Department to Convene in Washington, November 26.

*By A. F. of L. News Service.*

Washington.—A convention of the Building Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor will be held in the Executive Council Chamber, A. F. of L. Building, Washington, beginning at 10 A. M., Monday, November 26.

The formal call for the convention has been issued by William Green, president of the A. F. of L., and sent direct to all interested organizations, in accordance with the mandate of the fifty-fourth annual convention of the A. F. of L., recently concluded in San Francisco.

## Set Wage Rates for Oil Field Workers

*By A. F. of L. News Service.*

Washington.—Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes, the Oil Administrator, has ordered establishment of minimum wages for skilled occupation in derrick and rig building occupations in four oil-producing States. For Oklahoma and Kansas the rate was fixed at $1.25 an hour, and $1.50 an hour for tool dressers. For Texas and New Mexico, the skilled rate was fixed at $1.50 an hour, with crew foremen to receive a minimum of $1.75 an hour.

The Planning and Coordination Committee of the oil industry had recommend rates 25 cents an hour lower. However, the Petroleum Labor Policy Board, after hearings, disapproved this recommendation, and in turn recommended to Oil Administrator Ickes the higher rates, which were approved.

## Establish "Division Of Labor Standards"

*By A. F. of L. News Service.*

Washington.—A new Division of Labor Standards has been established as a bureau of the Department of Labor, according to an announcement by Secretary Perkins.

Verne A. Zimmer has been named as director and Miss Clare M. Beyer as assistant director.

The division is said to be intended to aid "interested parties and organizations to secure improvements in the working and living conditions of wage earners."

## AKRON RUBBER WORKERS EXTENDING ORGANIZATION

### Membership Campaign Expected to Attain Greater Results Than Last Year's Drive.

*By A. F. of L. News Service.*

Akron, Ohio.—Following a "special dispensation" granted by the American Federation of Labor, through President William Green, the three major Rubber Workers' Unions here started a membership drive to last 60 days, which is expected to result in the influencing and power of regular labor unions in this important industry to an even greater extent than the remarkable campaign of last year.

Although "company unions" have been clearly fostered, Coleman C. Cherbery, of the Rubber Workers, is confident of favorable results. The National Labor Relations Board has been requested to order and to supervise a representation election among local Firestone and Goodrich employes.

## SEAMLESS HOSIERY, BEARING UNION LABEL, IS REPORTED AVAILABLE

*By A. F. of L. News Service.*

Norristown, Pa.—Trade unionists particularly will be interested in hosiery of the Rambo-Regar concern, manufacturers of seamless hosiery, is using the union label. They are a full line of children's and men's hosiery.

It is stated that anyone interested in securing special information may communicate with John T. Goodbear, in care of Rambo-Regar Hosiery Co., or in care of the American Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers, 3721 North Fifth Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

## DETROIT BUTCHERS STRIKE

*By A. F. of L. News Service.*

Detroit, Mich.—A strike of members of Mastcutters and Butcher Workmen's Local Union No. 632, here, temporarily closed about 100 shops belonging to members of the Kosher Butchers' Association. Later, employers got together and opened about 75 shops, manned entirely by owners. Seventy-five shops were closed up tight.

Officials of the union announced they were prepared to "fight to the last ditch," the morals of the men being very good. Only minor adjustments in wages and working conditions were asked.